



City of Hickory
Post Office Box 398
Hickory, NC 28603-0398
Telephone 828/261-2222
Fax 828/323-7550

Mandy Pitts • Public Information Officer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Contact: Kevin Greer, PE
Public Utilities Director
(828) 323-7427**

Water suppliers in the Upper Catawba River Basin strengthen mandatory water restrictions

HICKORY – Water suppliers in the Upper Catawba River Basin strengthen mandatory water restrictions and ask all citizens to ban all outdoor watering with irrigation systems and sprinklers.

The more stringent restrictions now include:

- No lawn watering or irrigation. No sprinklers allowed.
- No residential car washing allowed.
- Ornamental fountains must be shut down.
- No filling pools.
- Trees, vegetables, flowers and shrubs may be watered any day of the week during the morning (7 a.m. to 11 a.m.) or late evening hours (7 p.m. to 10 p.m.) by use of a manned hose with a spring loaded nozzle, drip irrigation or soaker hoses.
- Car Lots must request a variance to wash their stock and the pressure washing companies must contact Public Utilities Departments for variances in order to avoid issuance of fines.

“We ask that when citizens are watering trees, flowers, shrubs and vegetable gardens to water minimally so as to keep plants alive but not over water,” said Hickory City Manager Mick Berry. “When limbs, leaves or petals are still pliable they are receiving enough water. We also ask citizens to hand water flowers, shrubs and vegetable gardens in the morning or evening.”

Hickory is part of the Catawba-Wateree Drought Management Advisory Group (DMAG) and all are projecting that drought conditions are getting worse. The public water system managers in the Catawba River Basin and Duke Energy are coordinating with each other and sharing information in order to manage during this extreme drought situation. Water suppliers in the Upper Catawba River Basin that are working together and taking the same measures are: Hickory, Conover, Claremont, Town of Catawba, Brookford, Long View, Maiden, Mountain View community in Catawba County, Sherrill’s Ford community in Catawba County, Alexander County (Highway 16

area, Sugarloaf and Bethlehem), Burke County, Morganton, Glen Alpine, Drexel, Valdese, Connelly Springs, Rhodhiss, Brentwood Water Corporation, Triple Community Water Corporation, Rutherford College Water Corporation, Caldwell County, Lenoir, Hudson, Granite Falls, Joyceton Water Works, Baton Water Works and Sawmills.

In late August, drought and hot temperatures led the water suppliers along the Catawba River Basin to mandate water restrictions. The goal in August and September was to reduce water use by five to ten percent, and now there is a need to reduce water consumption more than 20 percent.

Even if normal rainfall patterns returned soon, it would likely take many weeks or months for stream flow, reservoir levels and groundwater levels to be restored enough to return to less restrictive conditions. Mandatory water use restrictions may be necessary for a substantial period of time.

Typically, September and October are the time of year when many existing lawns are re-seeded and new lawns are started, requiring additional water. Establishing new residential lawns or reseeding existing lawns can be significant investments and with residential lawn watering banned those new strands of grass will have to completely rely on rainfall. Therefore, water users would be wise to consult their lawn care professionals with regard to over seeding and fertilizing options until more normal rainfall patterns return.

Fines are in place for those who do not follow the mandatory water restrictions.

Hickory customers are encouraged to listen to media reports about the mandatory water restrictions, visit www.hickorygov.com with water restrictions update, or call City of Hickory Public Utilities Division at (828) 323-7427.

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